

5-1974

## Beacon Light: May 1974

St. Cloud Hospital

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Volume XXIII Number 9

MAY, 1974

*Phase IV controls lifted*

# Hospitals struggle to keep rates down

Now that Phase IV regulations governing health care have been allowed to expire, hospitals face the ever present challenge of controlling costs, yet keeping pace with the effects of inflating operating expenses without passing big price increases on to their patients.

Although regulations limiting payroll increases to 5.5% and inpatient charges to 7.5% expired only a month ago, the Government has already issued warnings against "unbridled" increases in health care costs. The American Hospital Association (AHA) has reported that the warnings, which were delivered by the Health, Education and Welfare Department Secretary, Casper W. Weinberger, in a special meeting before some 30 major health organizations, cautioned health care providers to practice "an unusual degree of restraint" with respect to their charges.

"Health care costs remain the most serious single problem of the economy," Weinberger said. The AHA report also quotes Weinberger as citing the "very real possibility" of legislation to impose "shock treatment" controls similar to those of Phase I of the Economic Stabilization Program or "rigid" controls through national health insurance legislation if health care costs "bulge".

The St. Cloud Hospital's Fiscal Services Director, John Seckinger agrees that health care costs are bound to rise with the end of economic controls. "But," he points out, "the rate of increased costs is dependent upon the rate of inflation in the costs that the hospital incurs for wages, goods, and services.

"If they continue to increase at their present rate, which is anywhere from 15%-20%, we cannot be expected to keep our increases as low as we have in past years," he added. The St. Cloud Hospital was able to keep its general rate increase to 2-1/2% for the current fiscal year while nationally hospitals had price increases averaging nearly 4% (according to the Consumer Price Index on hospital service charges).

Seckinger, who has been the hospital's Fiscal Services Director for the past 8 years, said three major factors contributed to Saint Cloud Hospital's ability to keep increased costs at a minimum: cost conscious physicians, good management, and good planning.

"Our physicians realize that hospitals must be cost efficient," Seckinger said. "Their awareness of the need for cost control and proper utilization of our health care facility is one of the reasons why the patient's average cost per stay at the St. Cloud Hospital is significantly lower than the nation's average," he said. According to a Hospital Administrative Services (HAS) Report for the quarter ending in December, 1973, average cost per stay at the St. Cloud Hospital is \$786 per stay as compared with the national average of \$837 and Minneapolis-St. Paul's \$880.

"One way we've been able to keep our head above water in this period of high inflation," said Gene S. Bakke, St. Cloud Hospital's Executive Vice President, "is to keep in touch with what's going on around us."

"Members of our management team are constantly looking for ways to provide quality health care at a mini-

mum cost to the consumer.

"We've got our hands full just to keep up with changes going on outside the hospital, not to mention the management challenges we face within our institution," Bakke observed.

"Changes in our society, our environment, our technology, and increased government regulations on health care legislation have got many hospital administrators scrambling just to keep in touch," according to Bakke.

"Fortunately, for us here in St. Cloud," he said, "We have been able to use a progressive approach toward health care to implement new and innovative programs and still keep our cost increases to a minimum."

Both Seckinger and Bakke agree that any increases in hospital costs are going to have to be approached with (Rates struggle con't. on page 6)

## People Helping People

drawing by Barbara Sauer (2nd prize in NHW drawing contest)

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The Chaplain's Corner



Paul Kurtz, Guest columnist

St. Cloud Hospital Alcohol and Chemical Addiction Unit

Around the A & C unit, every spring, the staff begins to talk (and work) gardening. We spend our time discussing the value of manure, cold-frames and various kinds of mulching. In other words, we become interested in the process of growth. With inflation and the increasing price of food, many people are becoming interested in gardening. There is nothing better for combining physical exercise, a love of the outdoors, good health and vitamins. Just as spring thrills us because of the promise of growing plants — human growth and development is even more thrilling. While it is extremely satisfying to plant seeds in the spring and reap the harvest in the fall, it is even more satisfying to discover growth in ourselves and others. Human beings were meant to grow. Just as there is such a thing as evolution in the world of nature, persons were meant to evolve. This does not mean that all human beings do evolve. Some of us develop habits and customs which are self-defeating. But as we watch the force which is at work all around us in the springtime, we have to admit that the urge toward growth is powerful. Different from the plant world, we human beings have a choice. We can choose to destroy ourselves. The call of springtime is growth — renewal of life — resurrection. As we look around us, as we plant our fields and gardens, as we see the green of lawns, trees and hills, let's choose to grow. Let us decide to evolve. Let us, with the help of our Higher Power, decide against the habits which destroy — and give ourselves to growth. Let's evolve and enjoy the thrill of our own development.

PAC RAP

by Mary Leyendecker

During the past few months several people have questioned me regarding the Employee-Hospital relations procedure commonly known as the Appeal's Procedure. The purpose of this procedure is to give the employee a means of correcting the cause of his dissatisfaction or to answer any questions which may come up during his employment here. The Appeals Procedure was recently updated by the Personnel Policy Committee and it outlines the steps to follow during the appeals process. First, you should discuss the problem with your immediate supervisor. That person should check hospital policies and procedures and report the findings to you. If, after a mutually agreed upon time limit, you have not received a satisfactory answer, you may present your problem to your department head. If you still feel that you have not been helped with

your problem, you may then present it to the Wage & Benefits Manager or your elected representative of the Personnel Advisory Committee. The Personnel Advisory Committee will review your question or grievance. Following their review, the committee may make a recommendation to the Administration for the resolution of the problem. If at any time you should question this procedure, refer to your Employee Handbook or to your PAC representative. To change the subject slightly, I would like to remind everyone that a summary of each PAC meeting is video taped and presented several times a day on channel 6. Check the inservice bulletin for the time. At the last PAC meeting, it was decided that the committee would not meet during the months of July and August due to vacations. If an employee sees need for a meeting during these months, contact your PAC representative and a special meeting can be called.



Sr. Colleen Haggerty, OSB, Director of the General Services Division and Mike Seitz, Safety & Security Director, and Dennis Pundsack, Maintenance & Engineering, place the new color-coordinated direction system arrows on one of the hallway intersections in the Hospital. The system was developed under the direction of Sr. Colleen and is intended to help visitors easily find their destination. The system is in use on the main, ground, and basement levels with direction boards in the main floor lobbies and by the elevators on the other floors. All the signs are eye level so they can be seen easily.



Ed Stockinger, a member of the St. Cloud All-America City Committee was presented with a Mayor's Proclamation of Appreciation while he was a patient at the Hospital. Stockinger was not able to attend the All-America City banquet on April 24, when the awards were presented to the other members of the committee. So, Mayor Al Loehr made the presentation in Stockinger's room at the Hospital.

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Gene Bakke, Executive Vice President

COMMENT

by Executive Vice President

Gene S. Bakke

On May 10, 1974, 173 long-term employees were recognized for their outstanding service to the St. Cloud Hospital. The remarks that Mr. Bakke delivered to the staff members present at that event are being offered in this month's "Comment" so they can be shared with all SCH employees. It is an honor and a privilege to welcome each of you individually — and all 173 of you collectively — together with your wives, husbands, relatives or friends to this, our twelfth annual St. Cloud Hospital Employee Recognition Dinner. Tonight it is our opportunity — for those of us at the Board, Administration and Department Head level, to pay special tribute to those of you who have given from five to as much as 30 years of dedicated service to the sick and injured of the area through your association with St. Cloud Hospital. We want to say "thank you" from the bottom of our hearts for the many years of excellent work you have completed.

As you look back over your years of service at St. Cloud Hospital, I am sure that there is at least one conclusion that you would make — that over those years there have been dramatic changes in the circumstances and conditions in which we work. Not only has the hospital building itself undergone substantial remodeling and expansion, but the rapid developments in science and technology have challenged all of us to keep abreast of change. St. Cloud Hospital is not the same institution it was thirty years, or even five years ago. But another change of at least equal or even greater impact has occurred in the social environment in which we function. I am referring to the change in the attitudes of people — from one of acceptance and support to an attitude of questioning and challenging the traditional ways in which we do things.

This change in attitude is not unique with respect to hospitals or even the health care field. It is a condition that seems to apply to our whole social structure and most particularly where institutions are involved, probably because they are the most visible.

The question we need to ask ourselves is "How do we respond to these changes in attitude?" Do we ignore them and simply continue to function as we have in the past? Do we acknowledge this attitudinal change but only respond when the pressure becomes so great that we must react in order to survive? Or do we study and try to anticipate what is happening, and then use our influence and attempt to provide leadership to assure that change leads to a greater good and a better condition for the people we are committed to serve? I think most of us would tend to choose the latter course of action. But in so doing, it means that we all must call upon ourselves to accept the challenge, and rededicate ourselves to the service of the sick, the injured and the poor. And as a Catholic institution, this rededication, of course, implies a reaffirmation of the Christian principles and beliefs upon which our entire efforts are based.

It is people like you who, over a period of many years, have built a reputation for the St. Cloud Hospital that any hospital would be proud to possess. This fine reputation has been developed not only on the basis of excellence in care given patients, but recognizes, as well, the strong commitment we exhibit to the value of life and the dignity of the human person. People often tell me, not only here in St. Cloud but elsewhere, even at the national level, what a great job we are doing. In all honesty, I must point out to them that it is people like you who deserve the credit.

But of course we cannot rest on the accomplishments of the past. The good reputation we now enjoy would be quickly lost if we were to relax our efforts and lose our zeal for our highest goal — the service of Christ through our care for people who come to us in time of need.

And so, on this happy occasion, we highly commend you for the excellent service you have given over the years. At the same time, we exhort you to renew your commitment to the service of mankind with the hope that our efforts in the future will bear fruit with at least equal abundance as they have in the past.

OUR RECORD OF SERVICE

	Admissions	Births	Operations	x-rays	Lab. Tests	Emergency Outpatient Visits
March 1974	1475	165	607	4253	26374	922
1974 to March 31	4382	397	1811	12174	76632	2646



## Teamwork key to Hospital Week success

"Get to know us before you need us" was the theme of the 1974 National Hospital Week activities. During the week representatives of the St. Cloud Hospital took the opportunity to inform area residents about the many varied services and activities the Hospital provides. Appearances on local radio talk shows, a special display on Emergency Services at the Crossroads Mall, a Diabetes Van on the Mall Germain, and a special in-house fair all helped the public and members of the SCH staff get to know the hospital. In addition, a Recognition Dinner honoring long-term employees was held and the Hospital participated in a Disaster Planning Exercise.

### Inhouse Fair

The Inhouse Fair was a new activity to Hospital Week this year and over 30 departments participated by setting up special displays in the Hospital's Recreation Room. The event was highlighted by a Central Service equipment display, surgery's mock up of an operating table (complete with



Teamwork plays an important part in the proper function of a disaster plan. Above, transporters, nurses and a physician work to treat a patient as fast and expertly as possible.



Specially trained rescue squad volunteers remove accident victims quickly and carefully.



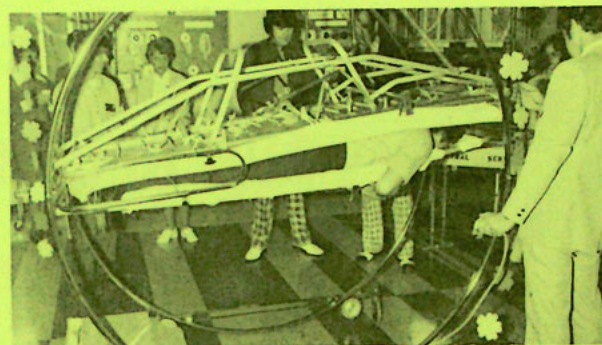
Eight long-term employees who retired during the past year were honored at the Recognition Dinner. Pictured above along with Gene Bakke, SCH Executive Vice President, are (from l-r): Mildred Seitz, 17 yrs.; Sr. Gemma Gertken, OSB, 23 yrs.; Sr. Amarita Bartylla, OSB, 33 yrs.;

instruments, anesthesia equipment and a patient), donuts provided by the Women's Auxiliary, and a slide tour of the hospital.

### Disaster Simulation

The Disaster exercise was especially unique this year because it involved two separate, unrelated incidents occurring almost simultaneously. It was observed by Veterans Administration Hospital officials from Washington, D.C. and the Twin Cities. The teamwork between the St. Cloud Hospital and the Veterans Administration Hospital was the one of their key observation points.

The diabetes detection van on the Mall Germain tested 170 people for diabetes. The van was from the Twin Cities Diabetes Association and sponsored by the St. Cloud Hospital and AHEC. Displays of the Emergency Service and Central Service were also located on the Crossroads Mall along with a slide tour of the Hospital. Brochures were given out at all displays providing information on the Emergency Service as well as selected facts about the Hospital.



The uses of the circular bed were demonstrated by Larry Reding, a representative of the Stryker Company.

Frank Karn, 45 yrs.; and Sr. Henrita Osendorf, OSB, President of the Board of Trustees. Also honored but not pictured were: Louis Canfield, 6 yrs.; Norma Paulson, 13 yrs.; Enie Malikowski, 19 yrs.; and Sr. Remberta Westkaemper, OSB, 11 yrs.

### Recognition Dinner

The following people were honored for their service to the St. Cloud Hospital at the Recognition Dinner:

30 Years:

Henry Lutgen

25 Years:

Jerry Knuesel

20 Years:

Elizabeth Menke, Dorraine Tomczik and Esther Merklung

15 Years:

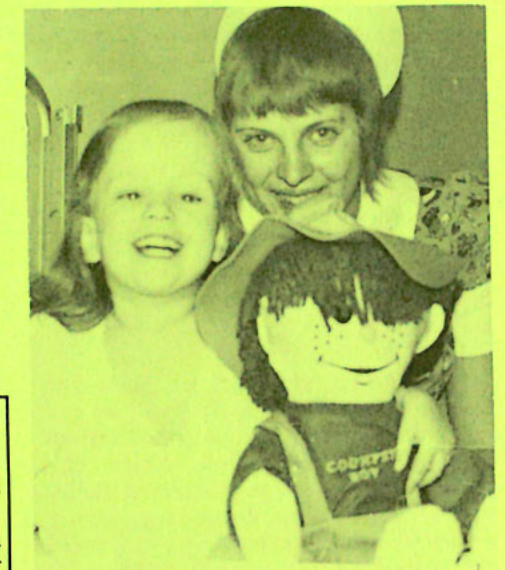
Eva Pearson, Rosemarie Ethan, Victor Trutwin, Bernadette Eich, Teckla Karn, Dorothy Court, Rita Johnson, Rose Schackman, Loretta Bruner and Ermelda Rengel.

10 Years:

Catherine Muntifering, Sylvia Valley, Marva Jorgensen, Lois Warnert, Janet Ahlstrand, Sr. Genrose OSB, Teckla Jagelski, Donna Strack, LeRoy Zierden, Julia Mazzuco, Rita Douvier, Marcella Thielen, Vivian Jussila, Lois Leeb, Alberta Clement, Laura Norden, Louise Studer, Barbara Pallansch, Julia Honkomp, Albert Ziegelmeier, Lucille Malecha, Marion Becker, and Ralph Schwagel.

One-hundred-twenty-four staff members were honored for five years of service.

## Country Boy doll given to Peds



Jerry Riebe and Dave Henning, managers of the local Country Kitchen Restaurant recently gave a Country Boy Doll to a group of nursing students for use in the Hospital's Pediatric unit.

Pictured above, along with the doll and a patient on the unit, is Nancy Fraser, a senior student at the Hospital School of Nursing.



Members of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) who are serving as volunteers at the hospital were honored April 18 in the new Personnel Dining Room. They were presented with service awards by St. Cloud Area service director Sally Jo Houkom. Awards were given to (l to r) Elizabeth Ziebal, Elizabeth McCarty, Ruth Brenner, Al Zenner, Miss Houkom (standing) Katherine Neu, Dorothy Schneider, and Enga Bratt.

## Can YOU spare an hour?

What is the value of one hour of your time to yourself . . . to others? It's possible you have estimated its worth too low. As little as one hour of your time could make a significant contribution to the health of millions. It could even save a life.

An hour spent donating a pint of blood contributes to the life-saving and health restoring work performed by the St. Cloud Hospital as well as 186 other hospitals within the five state area served by the St. Paul Regional Blood Center. Blood collected by the Center is also used in a variety of

research projects which are directed towards improving the nation's health.

The St. Cloud Hospital's service area is growing fast. So is its demand for blood. Spare an hour . . . give a pint.

The Red Cross Bloodmobile will be in the St. Cloud area July 9-12. Times and location are listed below:

July 9, Waite Park Legion —

1-6:30 p.m.

July 10, 11, Armory — 1-6:30 p.m.

July 12, Armory — 10 a.m.-3:30

Call 251-6735 or 251-7641 for an appointment.

## Staff Promotions

Donna Neubarth, Clerk-Typist in Administrative Pool, to Secretary.

Patricia Weisser, Junior Rehab. Assistant, to Senior Rehab Asst.

Mari Anderson, Dietary Aide, to Cook Aide II.

Tom Wheeler, Transporter in Dietary, to Storeroom Clerk in Dietary.

Andrew Olson, Storeroom Clerk in Dietary, to Storeroom Clerk in Purchasing.

John Kalkman, Transcriber Trainee on 3 So., to Transcriber.

Michael Depies, Cyto Technologist in Lab., to Section Chief of Cytology.

Edna Kurtz, Clerk Typist in X-ray, to Medical Secretary.

Marvin Kiffmeyer, Storeroom Clerk in Purchasing, to Shipping & Receiving Clerk.

Gregg Schneider, Computer Operator in EDP, to Operator Programmer.

Robert Stratton, Transcriber Trainee on 6 No., to Transcriber.

Delon Underbakke, Jr. Rehab. Asst. on 2 NW, to Senior Rehab. Asst.

## FROM THE ST. CLOUD HOSPITAL KITCHENS

Navy Bean soup is a hearty, filling dish for those rainy summer days. It's also a favorite at SCH and fills many requests as this month's recipe.

### From The St. Cloud Hospital Kitchens

1 lb. Navy Beans  
1/4 cup diced onions  
2 tbsps. butter  
2 tbsps. chopped parsley  
4 cubes chicken bouillon

1 Ham Bone  
1/4 cup diced Celery  
2 cups diced tomatoes  
2 cups water  
salt and pepper to taste

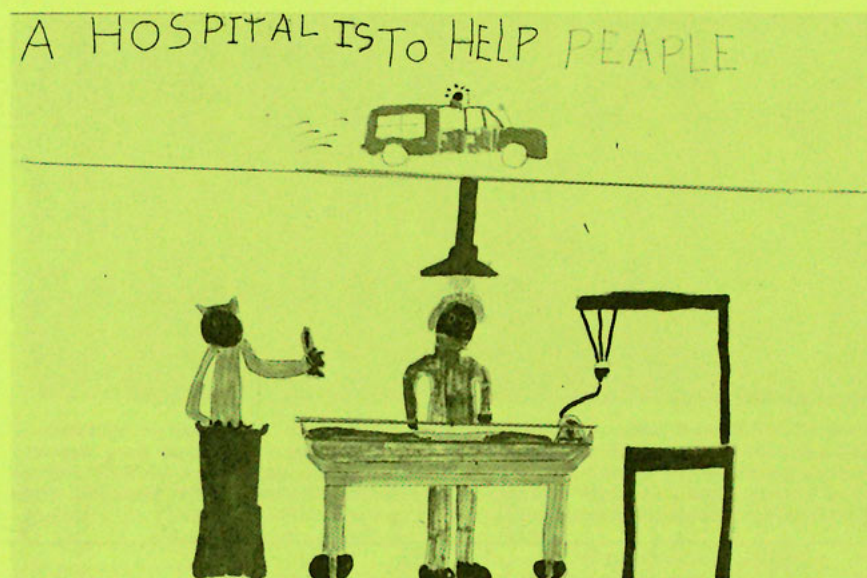
Pick over beans and wash thoroughly. Cover with cold water and soak overnight. Saute onions and celery in butter in Dutch oven or large kettle. Add beans, ham bone and tomatoes to saute mixture. Dissolve bouillon cubes in water. Add to bean mixture and simmer about 4 hours or until beans are tender. Add parsley, salt and pepper. Bruise beans with spoon before serving.



(Rates struggle from page 1)

discretion. This is why one of the major efforts of the Hospital's planning program has been directed at cost control. Through its Systems Design Department, the hospital is implementing quality control programs throughout the hospital. It has developed a variable budgeting system, it is establishing productivity indices for its departments, and has begun to implement the PETO System of flexible staffing throughout its nursing units. Each of these systems, is designed to correlate manpower with patient census or acuity of patient care. "It must be pointed out," said Bakke, "That our whole system of health care delivery is directed at the patient, and what it takes to provide him with the best possible care."

"The patient is what we build our budget around," he said, "and as the patient's needs for more specialized technology, more highly skilled employees, and more sophisticated facilities becomes more demanding, higher health care costs are going to be faced and met if we are going to continue to offer quality health care."



1st prize

A drawing contest was held as part of National Hospital Week and the participants were members of the fourth grade class at St. Paul's School. The students toured the Hospital on April 26 and did drawings of their impression of what the Hospital meant to them. Two students' drawings were singled out for awards. 1st prize went to Gary Rieder and 2nd prize to Barbara Sauer.

## Cost crunch heightens for hospitals

The following article appeared in the February, 1974 edition of PRISM magazine, a publication of the American Medical Association. While the article was published before Phase IV Controls were allowed to expire, it still provides an accurate outline of the economic problems hospitals face today. The story has been reprinted through the courtesy of the editors of PRISM.

Though the rate of increase in hospital income has been reduced 50 percent since the wage-price freeze went into effect in August, 1971, the rate of increase in expenditures has been cut only three percent—from 13 percent to ten percent per year.

If this situation continues into the future, expenditures at some point obviously will exceed revenues. "That situation generally is known as bankruptcy," says Everett A. Johnson, administrator of Methodist Hospital in Gary, Indiana.

An American Hospital Association survey last fall revealed that many hospitals were forced to borrow money from banks at commercial rates sometimes exceeding nine percent to pay their creditors. They are dipping into reserves earmarked for expansion or new equipment just to pay daily bills.

A case in point, according to the AHA, is the 282-bed Bon Secours Hospital in Methuen, Massachusetts,

which in recent months had to open a line of credit for \$350,000 at prevailing interest rates to pay current bills. (Interest rates have been fluctuating, but the hospital says that, for example, in months when these rates hit ten percent their interest payments run close to \$3,000.) The money squeeze has prevented the hospital from opening a planned pediatric health center for needy children.

Hospitals operated by religious orders and partially dependent on contributions are experiencing real financial difficulties. A Catholic hospital in economically depressed, racially troubled Cairo, Illinois, on the verge of closing last year, was rescued only when a community action group took over.

In East St. Louis, Illinois, the Christian Welfare Hospital used \$1.02 million in reserves slated for new construction and capital improvements just to "stay alive" last year, according to administrator Daniel Hicks.

Small hospitals that must maintain essential services despite climbing prices and low utilization are particularly hard-hit. So are big-city hospitals whose revenues come mostly from local, state, or federal agencies.

New York's Harlem Hospital, for example, is unable to borrow any more money, according to one AHA spokes-

man. Ninety percent of its patients are on Medicaid. Payment lags are creating an enormous cash flow problem for this hospital and for many others like it. There's just no turn-around money at all.

Big teaching institutions like The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, are losing money to the tune of one million dollars a year, and they are hunting. That hospital filed suit against the Cost of Living Council last October seeking to strike down regulations governing health institutions as "arbitrary and capricious" and petitioning for an OK to raise charges to cover operating losses. Losses are being met from endowment funds, and hospital officials say this could have an adverse effect on the hospital's future.

"It's a little hard to borrow money and even harder to repay it when you have a million-dollar-a-year loss," the hospital's treasurer, W. Thomas Barnes, told reporters recently.

Hospitals want freedom to raise rates apace with increases in the prices of the goods and services they must buy. Otherwise, they say, they will have to lay off large numbers of employees and curtail services.

William Lane, administrator at Bon Secours Hospital, says, "Even if we didn't go bankrupt, I would close if I could no longer give quality care."



ST. MARY JUDE, O.S.B., DIRECTOR

## ST. CLOUD SCHOOL OF NURSING Class of 1974



TERESE TAUFEN





## My Job and Why I Like It



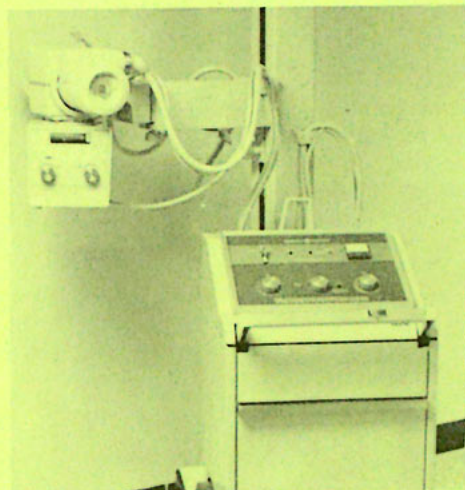
Mrs. Lorraine Curto

Variety, working in a well organized department, and a sense of responsibility to the patient are among Lorraine Curto's reasons for enjoying her job as a Processing Aide in the Hospital's Central Service Department.

Mrs. Curto has been an employee at SCH for the past four years. Her job includes processing recyclable items such as instruments used in the operating and delivery rooms, special trays for the Emergency Room, and Respiratory Therapy equipment.

In addition to working part-time at the hospital and raising a family of 3 boys and 6 girls, Mrs. Curto still finds time to spend on her hobbies which include sewing and bowling.

"My job offers a variety," said Mrs. Curto. "Each day is different. There is also a sense of responsibility to the patients needing our trays."



A new portable x-ray machine (pictured above) has been added to the Department of Radiology to provide better service to patients and better quality x-rays for doctor's use.

"Because the machine has the capacity to store energy, is cordless and can be self-propelled, X-ray consistency can be maintained." These are some of the reasons the particular unit was purchased according to Tom Nahan, Senior Radiology Technologist. "The machine is used when a patient is unable to be transported to the x-ray area and can be used many times before it needs to be recharged," Nahan said.

Nahan added, "In a disaster the machine could be pushed all over the hospital and take many x-rays very quickly and patients would not have to be moved."

## COMING PROGRAMS

Event	Date	Remarks
Natural Family Planning Group Instruction	May 30, June 6, 13, 20, 27 7:00 p.m.	Garden Room. For interested parents. Detailed information may be obtained by calling the Natural Family Planning Office at Saint Cloud Hospital.
Interdisciplinary Approach to Treatment of Central Nervous System Disorders.	May 31 June 1 & 2 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	Auditorium. A program sponsored by AHEC. Open to those with invitations.
Kidney Transplant Seminar	June 1 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Auditorium. Sponsored by the Continuing Education Department and the Kidney Foundation. Open to area professional people. No Registration or fees.
Pre-Surgical Party "Happy the Clown"	June 5 & 19 7:00 p.m.	Busch Room-Garden Room. Sponsored by the Pediatric Department. Open to parents and children scheduled for surgery. Includes tour of Peds and introduction to staff. Guests to report to the Information Desk. Refreshments will be served.
Cerebral Palsy Meeting	June 5 7:00 p.m.	Pierz Room. Open to interested people.
Calix Society	June 8-7:00 p.m. June 9-After Mass	Holy Hour for Calix Society members, in Hospital Chapel. Personnel Dining Room. Breakfast meeting for Calix Society members.
Candy Striper Awards Ceremony	June 10 7:00 p.m.	Auditorium. Open to Candy Strippers.
Medical Staff Meeting	June 11 7:00 p.m.	Auditorium. Meeting for all Saint Cloud Hospital Medical Staff Members.
Birthright Meeting	June 17 7:30 p.m.	Pierz Room. Open to interested people.
Ostomy Club	June 18 7:00 p.m.	Busch Room. Open to all interested people.
Epilepsy League Education Meeting	June 18 7:00 p.m.	Garden Room. Open to all interested people.

**Beacon Light**

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